

WELSH PHOTOGRAPHIC

GUIDE BOOKS

SCENERY OF CALIFORNIA

THE BIG TREES AND THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

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NELSONS' PICTORIAL GUIDE-BOOKS.

THE YOSEMITE VALLEY,

AND

THE MAMMOTH TREES AND GEYSERS OF CALIFORNIA.

One vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale unbosoms.

SHELLEY

T. NELSON AND SONS, 42 BLEECKER STREET, NEW YORK.

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REFERENCE

*. A companion Guide, under the title of "Nelsons' Pictorial Guide-Book to the CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD," is also published in this Series; and a "Pictorial Guide-Book to the UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD." With Illustrations from Photographs and other sources.



RIG TREE (PRIDE OF THE FOREST.)
(Calaveras Grove.)

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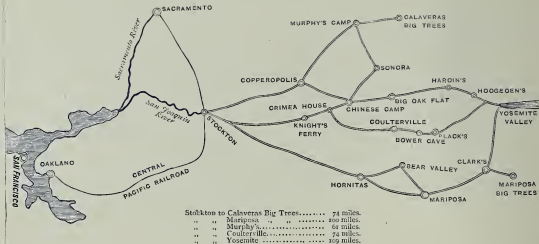
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OUTLINE MAP OF ROUTES TO YOSEMITE AND THE MAMMOTH TREE GROVES.

THE YOSEMITE VALLEY, AND THE MAMMOTH TREES AND GEYSERS OF CALIFORNIA.

I.—ROUTES TO THE YOSEMITE VALLEY.

THE traveller generally pursues his route, by Central Pacific Railroad, to San Francisco, and thence, after seeing all the interesting scenes and enjoying the generous hospitality of the Golden Gate of the Pacific, as the great new city has been happily called, he returns to *Stockton*,—92 miles.

From *Stockton* the three principal routes are:—

1. *The Mariposa*.—The stages leave in the morning for *Mariposa*, 100 miles; passing *French Camp*; *Snelling's*, on the *Merced River*; *Hornitas*, where the traveller can obtain a night's rest. From *Hornitas* there are two

sub-routes—one, *via* *Bear Valley*; the other direct to *Mariposa* (population, nearly 2000); thence to *Hatch's Saw Mill*, 12 miles; and *Clark's Ranch*, 25 miles (a trail diverges from this point to the *Mariposa Grove of Big Trees*). From *Clark's Ranch* (where saddle-horses are generally taken) to *Inspiration Point*, 15 miles (famous for its magnificent view of the *Yosemite Valley*); *Bridal Veil Fall*, 4 miles; *Hutchings' Hotel*, in the valley, 152½ miles from *Stockton*.

2. *The Coulterville*, daily, on *Sissons' stage line*: by way of *Farmington*, 16 miles; *Knight's Ferry*, on the *Stanislaus River*, 37 miles; *Crimea House*, 48 miles; *Mount Pleasant*, 50 miles; *Chinese Camp*, 51 miles. On

Shoop's line : Jacksonville, 3 miles ; Rattlesnake, 12 miles ; Coulterville, 23 miles. Thence, with horses and guides, Marble Springs and Bower Cave, 10 miles ; Black's House, 6 miles ; Crane Flat, 18 miles (a trail here leads off to the Tuolumne Grove of Big Trees). At 12 miles from Hutchings' Hotel we reach Valley View, so called because here we obtain the first view of the Yosemite.

3. *Hardin's Route* follows up Route 2 to Rattlesnake, and thence by Shoop's stage to Hodgeden's, 20 miles from Yosemite, by way of Big Oak Flat, Garrote, and the Tuolumne Grove of Big Trees. The traveller will take one route out, and another back.

II.—GENERAL INFORMATION.

Time was when, at New York, a visit to the Yosemite Valley was classed in the same category as an expedition to the North Pole, and adventurous persons bent on attempting it were urged, before they left, to make their wills and settle their affairs. But in those days a terrible journey across the prairies, the rivers, the deserts, and the mountains had really to be accomplished before the

traveller entered upon the object of his enterprise. Now, with the help of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific Railroads, we are howled across the continent with the utmost comfort, and at a considerable rate of speed, and are carried to Stockton, the starting-point for the Big Trees and the wonders of Yosemite, in a peculiarly agreeable manner. Consequently, the terrors of the expedition are considerably shorn. An atmosphere of romance, nevertheless, surrounded it, and tourists returning from it spoke vaguely of obstacles encountered and difficulties overcome, and represented themselves as having a kind of undefinable claim to the character of heroes. It cannot be said that any more moderate views prevailed in our guide books. Hence, friends gathering around us recommended that we should invest in a particular kind of flannel clothing, and that our "female relatives"—from sweet seventeen up to mature fifty—should add to their usual wardrobe the indispensable Bloomer costume. So, too, a certain kind of bag was necessary, in which to deposit the male attire, the ladies' wardrobe, and the Bloomer costume, when we had arrived at the boundary of the civilized world. Stages and other vehicles here ceasing to exist, we should need to mount on horseback,

slinging the said bags behind us without any fear of losing them. We were told by some of our good-natured friends that it was madness to attempt such a journey with ladies in our party; others, better natured, kindly said that the ladies were quite as able to undertake it as ourselves. Under these circumstances, we so far bowed to custom as to make the usual preparations, and, in despite of the scruples of the ladies, *remembered* the Bloomer costume.

Having completed these formidable arrangements, we started for STOCKTON, which, some twenty years ago, was the great central point whence the miners made their way to the mines—that is, to wealth and prosperity, or to ruin and premature or violent death. The town was once famous as “one of the dullest and most stupid places” in all California. Its inhabitants don’t call it dull, and we don’t affirm its stupidity. It is well built, well governed, and the scenery around it would occupy you pleasantly for a day or two.

From Stockton we set out, at length, on our journey to the Yosemite, selecting the shortest and easiest route—that of Hardin’s.

On this route our first stage is the *Twelve Mile House*, where we breakfast and take horses. Thence we traverse

an undulating country, blooming with wild flowers, but containing few shrubs or trees. At *Twenty-five Mile House* we again change horses; and about noon we reach *Knight’s Ferry*, on the Stanislaus River, a pleasant settlement, surrounded by farms and orchards, and rendered doubly pleasant to the traveller as his dining station.

Crossing the Stanislaus Bridge, we wind to the left, over an offshoot of the mass of trap called the Table Mountain, so called because its summit seems to be comparatively level for about twelve to fifteen miles. Towards evening we arrive at *Chinese Camp*, where we spend the night, satisfied that our day’s journey has been one of which we have a right to boast.

The next morning we are up betimes, and ride in merry mood up hill and down hill, through leafy avenue, across grassy glade—the whole landscape having an indescribable air of freshness about it—to the Tuolumne River, and the mining settlement of Jacksonville. Beyond lies a kind of paradise that would have set some of the old-world poets raving—“Keith’s Orchard and Vineyard,” where, as in Milton’s Garden of Eden, fruits of the greatest variety and finest quality ripen for the benefit of humanity.

The Tuolumne River we cross at *Stevens' Bar Ferry*, and thence we wind up Moccasin Creek to "Newhall and Culbertson's Vineyard." If we had not said so much in praise of Keith's, we would say it in honour of Newhall and Culbertson. Drink their health, my friends, in a glass of white wine which beats "Catawba"!

We now begin our ascent of the mountain—an ascent of 7000 feet. Sturdy pedestrians, with kindly feelings towards animals, will here trudge afoot; ladies can still keep to their conveyances.

We get an interval of rest at *Kirkwood's*, while the horses are watered, and the mails and passengers (those who don't ride) are turned over to the stage for Coulterville. Now we are off for Garrote, where we shall breakfast, passing on our way "the sturdy branch-lopped and root-cut veteran trunk of a noble and enormous oak, some eleven feet in diameter, still standing on our right:" it has given name to the locality, "*Big Oak Flat*."

At *Garrote* we transfer our admiration to the excellent cuisine and admirable attendance at Savory's, or the Washington Hotel.

On our way to *Second Garrote* (who gave these names, we wonder?) we pass another delicious Eden-like orchard

—Chaffey and Chamberlain's—of which we consider it our duty to say that it is the *last* orchard on *this* side of the Yosemite Valley. We may, therefore, suggest the necessity of *laying in a supply*.

After leaving *Sprague's Ranch* behind us, we find the landscape rapidly changing in character. It is evidently laid out, so to speak, on a bolder scale—the hills are replaced by mountains, the groves by forests, the calm and gentle by the romantic and picturesque. As our friend Hutchings tells us, in his vigorous way, an occasional deer will now shoot across our track, or covies of quail, with their fine plumage and nodding "top-knots," whirr among the bushes. If we have any feeling for the magic of sweet sounds, we shall listen delighted to the meadow lark, the robin, and the oriole; and recollections of our childhood will come back with the low purring note of the dove. Instead of the eastern woodpecker "tapping at the hollow beech tree," the red-headed Californian species, with whose wonderful ingenuity Wilson has made us familiar,—*El Carpintero*, the Carpenter Woodpecker,*—is hard at work boring holes in the bark of a large

* Also known as the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker.

pine tree, and afterwards carefully plugging them up with acorns, or examining them with a critical eye, to see if his toil does credit to his taste. The reason for this latter occupation is, according to Hutchings, still a mystery to naturalists. As the greatest activity in the storing was in the fall, and the inspection went on at other seasons, it was for many years supposed that an instinctive provision for a coming want was the cause. But as this variety of woodpecker has seldom or never been seen feeding on the acorn, or on the supposed insect which it contained, some doubt has arisen as to the satisfactory nature of its occupation.*

Resuming our journey, we pass, in due succession, Hamilton's, near Big Gap; Hardin's Mill, 7 miles; Hodgeden's, 6 miles; Coburn's, at Crane Flat, 5 miles; and Tamarack Flat, 5 miles.

The entire road opens up to us a series of the most magnificent landscapes ever designed and executed by the Divine Hand. Are you a votary to colour? Here you have it in all its rarest and richest hues—now light and

floating, now deep and intense—from azure to ultramarine, from pink to crimson, from the palest emerald blade to the deepest sea-green foliage. Are you a lover of form? Contemplate, then, its thousand varieties, from the utmost ruggedness of outline to the most delicate curve of grace—rounded, pyramidal, sharp, bold, soft, sublime. In the ravine beneath you, the Tuolumne winds its silver thread. On the cliffs above, the ancient forest trees rear themselves like the pillars of a magnificent temple. The flanks of the valley are sometimes bare, but oftener clothed with the most luxurious verdure. Far away against the horizon, the mountains roll like billows, till they blend in the distant sky. Near at hand, you catch the music of waters tumbling unseen from rock to rock.

Beyond Hardin's we cross the south fork of the Tuolumne, and climb to a well-wooded table-land, where various kinds of conifers attain to a remarkable height and girth.

Horace Greeley does justice to this superb forest-growth. He considers that the one feature in which the Sierra Nevadas surpass other mountains is in their forests. "Look down," he says, "from almost any of their peaks, and your range of vision is filled, bounded, satisfied, by what might be termed a tempest-tossed sea of evergreens,

* It is generally understood, however, that a maggot makes its way into the acorn, and, in due time, is extracted by the woodpecker to satisfy his appetite.

filling every upland valley, covering every hill-side, crowning every peak but the highest, with their unfading luxuriance." Many hundreds of pines are eight feet in diameter, with cedars at least six feet; and these forest-giants extend for miles and miles in serried ranks almost as close as those of a well-disciplined army. The summit meadows, moreover, are adorned with a heavy fringe of balsam fir of all sizes, from those barely one foot high to those hardly less than two hundred.

In fact, you must see this vast wilderness of colossal trees before you can rightly appreciate their imposing and almost formidable aspect.

By diverging a mile or two from our route—which we shall not do, though leaving other travellers their full liberty of choice—we may see the "*Tuolumne South Grove*" of mammoth trees. The trees here are of the same genus (*Wellingtonia* or *Sequoia gigantea*) as those of Calaveras and Mariposa. They are about thirty in number, and some of them are fine specimens. Two, growing from the same root, and uniting a few feet above the base, are called the "Siamese Twins." They measure about 114 feet in circumference at the ground, the diameter, of course, being about 38 feet. The bark is 20 inches thick.

Crossing the grassy water-meadow of *Crane Flat*, we keep to the north-east until we reach the summit of the watershed that pours the Tuolumne in one direction and the Merced, or "River of Mercy," in another. We pause, almost breathless with the wonder and beauty of the scene before us, full as it is of God's grandest, mightiest, and most surpassing handiwork, and, mute with astonishment, and lost in awe, begin the descent into the Yosemite Valley. It is by no means a "*facilis descensus Averni*," for the road is difficult and nerve-testing, and yet it is as charming as a young man's fancy could wish it to be with over-arching trees and flowering bushes.

At *Tamarack Flat* we all of us mount on horseback, taking care that our saddles shall be well secured, and enter upon the more difficult and dangerous part of the downward track. Yet we hardly notice the danger, our eyes and attention are so arrested by the novelties which cluster everywhere about us.

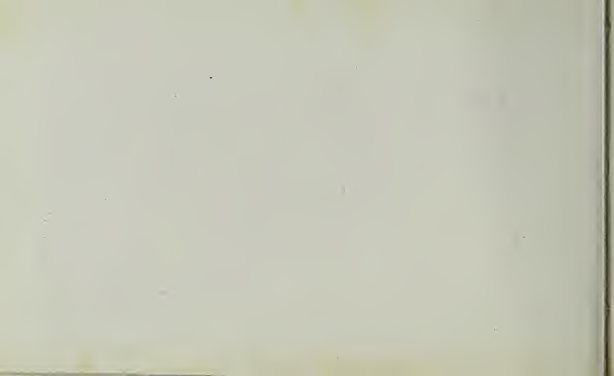
A rough and rustic bridge takes us across *Cascade Creek*,—the said cascade wandering far away in a succession of falls and whirlpools; never resting; never conquered by any obstacle; now white with foam; now dark



THE BRIDAL VEIL FALL.

(Yosemite Valley)

940 FEET



as night ; now crooning a soft low tune ; now seething and hissing in sudden fury.

Then the guide bids us pause on a rocky projection, called *Prospect Point*, whence we can see the Merced flashing in a craggy ravine beneath.

Down the swift declivity of the mountain we cautiously and patiently make our way. The foot is reached, and close below us are the foaming rapids of the river, and on each bank the clustering firs and aspiring pines, loading the air with the fragrance of their leaves. Above us, apparently at a tremendous elevation, the firmament glows like an immense sapphire ; and before us extends in all its rare and undefinable magnificence, closed in by vast precipitous walls of gleaming granite, thronged with colossal pines, murmurous with the echoes of falling waters, the enchanted land of the New World—the Valley of the Yosemite ! *

Observe : the valley at present is accessible only by two entrances—the one we have just taken ; and the other, immediately opposite the river, by way of Mariposa. It is proposed to carry a railroad into the valley.

* Pronounced Yo-sem'-i-tè.

III.—THE YOSEMITE VALLEY.

“ In grandeur, sublimity, and beauty, the Yosemite Valley stands alone. At the upper end there have been shakings and rendings, rocks thrown down on either side, sometimes as large as a great church, as if demons had been breaking up and hurling the mountains at each other. The river dashes and bounds among these fragments as if frightened and infuriated ; and then half an hour's ride brings you to the oaks, and pines, and lawns, smooth as a garden, wild as nature, not showing the mark of axe, or anything to alter this park from what it was when the eye of man first looked into it.”—DR. TODD, *The Sunset Land*.

We now begin our exploration of the valley.

The first feature which impresses us is the *Bridal Veil Fall* (the *Pohonó*, or “ Spirit of the Evil Wind”), which descends from a height of about 940 feet. *Pohonó* is an evil spirit of the Indian mythology. The tradition connected with this fall, and with the second peak of the summit west of it, where you may trace the noble head and features of a demi-god in profile, we shall hereafter relate.

The fall itself is the overflow of a stream which flows down a rugged canyon, some twelve or fifteen miles, before it lets itself down from the brink of the cliff in one un-

broken sheet of silver, forty feet wide, upon a mass of gigantic boulders.

Its American name is rather happy. For to one viewing it in profile, says Ludlow, its snowy sheet, broken into the filmy silver lacework of airy spray, and falling entirely free of the brow of the precipice, might well seem the veil worn by Earth at her "granite wedding," millions, it may be, millions of years ago.

On either side of Pohono the sky-line of the precipice is diversified in the boldest and most striking manner. The fall itself cleaves a deep chasm into the crown of the battlement. To the south-west rises a bold but unnamed rock, 3000 feet in height; and not far distant is *Sentinel Rock*, a "solitary truncate pinnacle," towering to 3300 feet. Nearly opposite soar the three ascending ridges of *Eleachas*, or the *Three Brothers*, the highest attaining to the elevation of 3450 feet.

But we make our way, almost satiate with wonders, to one of the three hotels to be found in the valley—Black's, Hutchings', and Leidig's, to name them in alphabetical order. The following morning we begin a systematic survey, which, at the least, will occupy us *three*, but may well and satisfactorily be extended to *seven* days.

(85)

Hutchings is our guide (there can be none better), and, therefore, the first "object of interest"—to use a hackneyed phrase—which calls for our attention, and, as a matter of course, for our admiration, is

THE YOSEMITE FALLS.

Crossing the main stream, which is here about eighty feet wide and five feet deep, we continue along the northern bank, to avoid the marshy flats on the southern, until we reach the ford, where we re-cross the river, under an embowering canopy of oak, maple, and dogwood trees.

As the snow, under the summer sun, is rapidly melting, we ford, not only the main channel, but several smaller streams. Within about a hundred and fifty yards of the fall our progress is interrupted by a succession of large boulders. Therefore we dismount, and, fastening our animals to the nearest saplings, push forward on foot.

We now proceed to climb to the base, or, as nearly as possible to the base, of the great Yosemite Falls, the loftiest cascade or cataract in the world. There are, in fact, *two* falls, of which the upper pours down a tre-



THE YOSEMITE FALLS.
(3824 FEET).

mendous sheet of silver for a depth of 1448 feet, and the second plumps sheer down the precipice for 700 feet; while, between the two, measuring about 400 feet, a series of rapids form an appropriate connecting link. Thus the total height of the "sheeted column's perpendicular" is 2548 feet. By some authorities, however, this total is brought up to 2634 feet.

It is difficult to describe the power and majesty of a gigantic waterfall. But the impression made on the mind by the ceaseless rush—by the tumbling waters perpetually flashing and gleaming, roaring and murmuring—by the intuitive feeling that the *motion* before you has never paused since the creation, and *will* never pause until Time shall cease to be,—is almost bewildering. You find yourself at a loss to take in the separate details: the huge wall of granite rising so massively before you; the huge masses of multiform rocks strewn, and scattered, and piled in every direction; the ferns, and wild flowers, and lovely mosses which here and there relieve the harsher features of Nature. All your soul is concentrated on the vastness of the fall, which seems to fill up the entire picture, so that wherever you go you still seem to see the deep glow of the waters, to catch the flash of their dia-

mond spray, to hear the whirr and clash of their endless progress.

It is said that in the winter the spray from the great cataract freezes, and piles up and again freezes, until a hollow pillar is constructed some hundreds of feet in height. Into that pillar the waters pour, and then rebound like rainbow-coloured balls.

In the spring, the rush of the cataract and its thousand voices seem for a moment to be arrested. You hasten to the spot. The floods have undermined this glorious pillar, and made ready to topple it from its elevation. The struggle is brief, but desperate. Suddenly the ice yields, and is shivered, and hurled into the air in a thousand fragments, sparkling and shining with a lustrous gleam, and then falling back into the stream, to be carried away and seen no more.

The falls, let us add, seem, at their summit, to be about three or four feet wide; but Mr. Hutchings, who has ascended the mountain over which they take their headlong leap, declares they are fully forty feet.

They are not often visited in spring-time; but Mr. Carleton Coffin asserts that then they are a hundred times more majestic than in autumn. This we can

readily believe to be the effect of the sun melting the snows. Evidences of the *power* of which we have spoken, but which it is so difficult to realize, are afforded, as Mr. Coffin points out, by the great boulders of granite around us, larger than a thirty-ton locomotive, which, in years remote, fell thundering down the dizzy height, snapping the great trees as if they were reeds, and grinding and pulverizing the rocks. Thus, says Mr. Coffin, the Almighty bids the forces of nature grind the solid granite into flour for human food—the “River of Mercy” carrying it out upon the meadows, to be transmuted by golden sunlight and nightly dews into ripened wheat and purpling grapes.

LAKE AH-WI-YAH.

This is one of the loveliest localities in the valley. You confront the great falls almost with a sense of apprehension and a feeling of undefinable awe: but you look upon this crystal mirror with a sentiment of subdued admiration.

In its sheet of unrippled glass—especially at early morning—it reflects the mountains, 4000 and 5000 feet high, with such a wonderful clearness that you can readily detect the furrows on their brows and the ledges and

ravines in their rugged sides. It is not above a couple of acres in extent, but this remarkable translucency gives it a curious *appearance* of vastness. The bases of the mountains all around are fringed with noble trees, which supply in their various foliage a delightful contrast to the azure of the pool beneath. On the north-east a deep canyon, or gorge, opens wide, to permit the outflow of the north branch of the “River of Mercy,” which supplies the lake.

To the north of the valley rises

THE GREAT NORTH DOME,

or *To-coy-æ* of the Indians, a mass of bold, bare granite, with scarce a tree or shrub, rising to a height of 3725 feet. In its huge sides, which, for two thousand feet, are absolutely perpendicular, a colossal arch has been created by the disruption, in all probability, of several sections of the rock. Look with admiration at the “Royal Arch of *To-coy-æ*!” According to our guide, philosopher, and friend, Mr. Hutchings, it has never been submitted to exact geometrical measurement; but a well-trained eye gives as its altitude, from the valley to the crown of the arch, 1700 feet; its span, 2000 feet; its internal depth,



THE NORTH & SOUTH DOMES

(Yosemite Valley)



90 feet. Kings and queens of the earth, here is a noble council-chamber for ye!

To the south-east of the Mirror Lake, or Lake Hiawatha, as it is sometimes called, towers the majestic bulk of

THE SOUTH DOME,

or *Mount Tis-sa-ack*, which, though by some tremendous convulsion it has been sorely reduced in elevation, and nearly one half of it borne down in a broken pile into the depth of the subjacent valley, is still 4593 feet in height.

The base is shrouded in the "hazy mystery" which, more or less, surrounds everything in the Yosemite Valley. "Numerous little white clouds, becoming detached from this misty curtain, are sailing (as we gaze) up the mountain-side, dodging about among the projecting spurs, intruding their beautiful forms slowly into the dark caverns, puffed out again in a hurry by the eddying winds which hold possession of these gloomy recesses, and then resume their upward flight, each following the other with the precision and regularity of a fleet of white-winged yachts rounding the flag-boat, and each eaten up by the sun with astonishing rapidity, as they

sail slowly past the angle of shadow thrown across the lower half of the mountain. High above all this, in the clear bright sunshine, towers the lofty summit, every projection and indentation, weather and water stain, fern, vine, and lichen so clearly defined that one can almost seem to touch its surface by merely extending the arm."

The summit of this beautiful mountain has never yet, we think, been touched by the foot of man. In the Indian belief it is the home of the good spirit of the valley, the lovely *Tis-sa-ack*; and a fantastic legend is connected with it which the traveller will doubtless be pleased to hear. Different writers relate it somewhat differently, but the following version seems to be tolerably accurate:—

THE LEGEND OF TIS-SA-ACK AND TU-TOCH-AH-NU-LAH.

In a far distant age, the valley which we now name the Valley of the Yosemite was the home of the children of the sun. They lived there peacefully under the guardianship of their chief, Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah, who dwelt upon the huge rock that still bears his name. With a glance of his eye he saw all that his people were doing.

Swifter on foot than the elk, he herded the wild deer as if they were sheep. He roused the bear from his mountain-cave that the young people might hunt him. From the crest of the mountain height he prayed to the Great Spirit, and the soft rains descended upon the corn in the valley. The smoke of his pipe curled up into the air, and the warm sunshine streamed through it, and ripened the golden crops for the women to gather them in. When he laughed, the river rippled with smiles; when he sighed, the murmurous pines repeated the plaint. When he spoke, the voice of the cataract was hushed into silence; when his shout of triumph arose over the bear he had slain, it was repeated by every echo, and rolled like a thunder-peal from one mountain to another. His form was straight as an arrow, and elastic as a bow. His foot outstripped the red deer, and the glance of his eye was like the lightning flash.

But one morning, when hunting, a bright vision dawned upon him of a lovely maiden sitting alone on the very summit of the South Dome. Unlike the nymphs of his tribe, she was not wreathed in tresses black as night, nor was the gleam of darkness in her eyes; but down her back fell the long golden hair like a stream of sunshine.

(85)

Her brow was pale with the beauty of the moonlight; her eyes were blue as the mountains in the hour of twilight. Her little feet shone like the snow-crests on the pine-woods of the winter; she had small cloud-like wings drooping from her marble shoulders; her voice murmured sweetly and softly, like the tones of the night-bird of the forest.

"Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah!" she whispered, and was gone. From crag to crag, over gorge and chasm, rushed the impetuous chief in pursuit of the aerial beauty; but, lo! her snow-white wings had conveyed her to the unknown land, and Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah saw her no more.

Day after day did the young chief wander among the mountains seeking after the beautiful one he had lost. Day after day did he lay sweet acorns and fragrant wild flowers upon her dome. Once his ear caught her footstep, light as the fall of a snowflake on a river. Once he caught a glimpse of her form, and a tender glance from her radiant eyes. But he was voiceless before her; nor ever did her sweet tones fall upon his expectant ear. So passionate was his love for Tis-sa-ack, so absorbed was he in his dreams and thoughts of the beautiful maiden, that he forgot his people; and the rains ceased to descend,

EL CAPITAN

SOUTH DOME

BRIDAL VEIL FALL



THE YO-SEMITE VALLEY.

(From the Mariposa Trail.)

and the valley became athirst, and the crops withered where they stood; the beautiful flowers bent their heads and died; the winds lost their power, and ceased to cool the valley; the waters passed away, and the green leaves faded into brown. Nothing of this was seen by Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah, for his eyes were wholly fixed on the vision of the mountains. But Tis-sa-ack saw it, and saw with sorrow; and kneeling on the gray rock of the dome, she prayed to the Great Spirit that he would again give to the people the bright flowers and delicate grasses, the leafy trees, and the nodding acorns.

Then, in a moment, the great dome on which she knelt was cloven asunder, and through the gorge thus opened rushed the melting snows from the Sierra Nevada in the wide channel of the River of Mercy. And the rocks that simultaneously fell from the mountain banked up so much of the waters as were sufficient to fill the Mirror Lake. Then, indeed, the scene was changed. The birds wetted their wings in the rills and pools, and burst into joyful song; the grasses spread stealthily over the gladdened soil; the flowers received a new life, which they poured out in grateful fragrance; the golden corn sprung up in its abundance; and the merry wind aroused a thousand

slumbering echoes. But in the convulsion which had inaugurated this transformation, the maiden had disappeared for ever. And for ever the Half-dome bears her name, in grateful recognition of her love for the Indian people—*Tis-sa-ack*. Every morning and evening the sun lifts from or lays his rosy mantle upon the summit; and all around the margin of the lake bloom myriads of white violets, the memorials of the snow feathers dropped from Tis-sa-ack's wings as she flew away.

When Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah discovered that she would be seen no more, he abandoned his rocky fastness; and, with a bold hand, carving the outline of his head and form on the face of the rock that still bears his name, a thousand feet above the valley, he went in search of the lost one. On reaching the other side of the beautiful ravine, a feeling of deep melancholy fell upon him. Unwilling to quit it, he sat down, gazing far away towards the sunset, whither, as he believed, his Tis-sa-ack had bent her flight.

And as he sat, his grief weighed heavily on his heart, and he ceased to have motion or life in his blood. Slowly he changed into stone; and the voiceless, breathless, lifeless figure may still be seen by every visitor to the

Yosemite, looking afar off to the land of the sunset, in wistful inquiry for the loved and lost.

So runs the legend.*

IV.—THE YOSEMITE VALLEY—*continued.*

ITS FALLS AND MOUNTAINS.

THE POHONÓ FALL.

The next point to which the admiring, wondering, open-eyed and open-eared visitor betakes himself is the *Pohonó*, or *Bridal Veil Fall*. This is passed by those who enter the valley either from Coulterville or Mariposa, and has already been noticed by us. In visiting it from any of the hotels, we keep down the south side of the valley. On our left rises the lonely Sentinel Rock, on whose crest so often blazed the watch-fires of the Indians. Beyond we come to a succession of curious peaks,

very picturesque and suggestive in their outline. These are the *Cathedral Rocks* and the *Cathedral Spires*—names which no imaginative traveller will consider inappropriate.

In addition to what we have already said about the feathery, luminous, lace-like fall, we take leave to borrow from Mr. Hutchings an allusion to the Indian superstition respecting it:—

"Pohonó," he says, "from whom the stream and the waterfall received their musical Indian name, is an evil spirit, whose breath is a blighting and fatal wind, and consequently is to be dreaded and shunned. On this account, whenever from necessity the Indians have to pass it, a feeling of distress steals over them, and they fear it as much as the wandering Arab does the simooms of the African desert: they hurry past it at the height of their speed. To point to the waterfall, as they travel through the valley, is in their minds to induce certain death. No bribe could be offered large enough to tempt them to sleep near it. It is, in truth, their belief that they hear the voices of those who have been drowned in the stream perpetually warning them to shun *Pohonó*."

* See Dr. Todd, "Sunset Land;" Ludlow, "Heart of the Continent;" and Hutchings, "Scenes of Wonder in California."



VERNAL FALL.
(Yosemite Valley.)

THE PI-WY-ACK (OR VERNAL) AND YO-WI-YE (OR NEVADA) FALLS.

To visit these beautiful and justly-famed falls we must take quite an opposite direction to any we have yet followed. On leaving the hotel we turn to the right, and *ascend* the valley, which widens as we advance, and is brightened by noble oak trees, standing alone or in clumps at irregular intervals.

The precipitous wall of granite on our right, 3740 feet high, is silvered by a number of tiny rills that glide or leap down its face. At one point the jutting rocks unite so as to suggest a faint resemblance to a hospice; and this, with a recollection of the Alps, has been named Mount St. Bernard. But, in fact, the outlines of the peaks are so very varied that a lively imagination can easily suggest a hundred quaint resemblances; and these resemblances are more or less conspicuous as we look upon them in shadow or in sunshine, at dawn or purple twilight.

On our right we pass the Royal Arches, Washington Tower, the North and South Domes, and more picturesque and magnificent objects than we have time or space to enumerate. Let the traveller beware of fatiguing himself

with admiration, or when he reaches the falls he will have spent his enthusiasm, and be forced to contemplate them (if he can) with indifference. Admiration! Why, who can have a sufficient supply to bestow, not only on rocks and rills, but on all the lofty and noble trees around us—pine, cedar, spruce, black oak, and dogwood; or on all the flowering shrubs and fragrant flowers, from the white azalea and the aromatic laurel to the modest primrose and larkspur?

The "Vernal" Fall, as it is unmeaningly named—that is, the Pi-wy-ack—lies upwards of two miles from the hotel. The view of this beautiful cataract obtainable from below, where it mingles with the river in a noisy, boiling, foaming whirlpool, is very fine; but the view from above is infinitely finer. The ascent is made by means of the Ladders (charge for ascending and descending, 75 cents); and the prospect we see may be described somewhat as follows. Here what is called the Middle Fall of the river, after thundering through a rugged gorge, springs from the ledge of the precipice in one unbroken leap of 350 feet in depth and 60 feet in width. Think, O reader, of the sublime spectacle *hidden* in these figures!—a wall, and yet a *moving* wall, of apparent

silver, lit up with diamond and ruby flashes, and 350 feet in height!

Above Pi-wy-ack the river runs for a mile in its granite channel, which slopes upward on either side ^{45°} at an angle of about 45°, on great tabular masses, smooth and slippery as ice, and without a chink or cranny in them for thirty yards at a stretch, where even the scraggiest *manzanita* may catch hold and flourish. This tilted formation—to use Mr. Ludlow's words—broken here and there by patches of scanty alluvium and groups of stunted pines, stretches upward until it intersects the posterior cone of the South Dome on one side, and a gigantic battlemented precipice on the other; the whole presenting a landscape of weird desolation. As a traveller says, to a reader acquainted only with the wooded slopes of the Alleghanies, the shining barrenness of these rocks, and the utter nakedness of the glittering dome beyond them, cannot be described by any metaphor.

Climbing between stunted pines and huge boulders for about half a mile, we arrive at the base of the *Yo-wi-ye*, or Nevada Fall, which, if inferior in beauty to the Pi-wy-ack, has, at all events, a greater volume of water. Its

height is 700 feet. It falls from a precipice whose higher portion is singularly smooth and perpendicular. Then it is deflected by an unseen ledge in a slantwise direction, and at an angle of about 30°; the effect of the sudden deviation being to expand it, "like a half-opened fan," to the width of 200 feet. The spectacle, consequently, is not only sublime and imposing, but exquisitely beautiful; and all the more so from the contrast of the shining, shifting, foaming waters, to the rugged framework of granite in which they are set like a picture.

We are weary of description, or we would tell you of another fall—*Tu-lool-we-ack*—in the South Canyon gorge, which is 600 feet high, and "a very pretty thing, sirs, as it stands!" Just go and look at it for yourself, my friend. It drops down into a kind of semicircular basin, whose rocky sides are as near perpendicular as may be.

The view of the South Dome from the recesses of the South Canyon is one of those sights which no man forgets, however long he may live. It fills you with an overpowering sense of the grandeur of Nature—of the tremendous power of Nature's Creator, who set in motion the resistless agencies that have wrought out these features of majesty and awful sublimity.



THE THREE BROTHERS.
Yosemite Valley



THE MOUNTAINS.

Of the noble summits—so varied in their configuration, so similar in their grandeur—that close in the Yosemite Valley, but few have been ascended; and to ourselves, who abominate the vulgarization of Nature, this seems a special matter for thankfulness. At the north side of the Nevada Fall, however, a mass of rock, 2000 feet above the foot of the cataract, and differently entitled Mount Given, Bellows Butte, Mount Francis, Mount Frederick, and the like, by the fancy of successive visitors—more properly and significantly the *Cap of Liberty*—can be conquered by the profane foot of man without any great difficulty. The prospect—at all events, from the south-eastern angle—is very impressive, and includes the winding course of the Merced, and the tremendous headlong plunge of the Nevada, the majestic Yosemite Falls, the Sentinel Dome, the Mount Starr King, the regal South Dome, and a legion of other lofty peaks.

Not *less* magnificent is the picture revealed from the summit ridge of the *Three Brothers*; but still more magnificent is that which the bold spirit enjoys who rises to the level of the crest of *Mount Beatitude*.

For from this noble elevation (2900 feet) we obtain a complete, unbroken view of the valley and its inclosing peaks. Like a ribbon of silver, the Merced winds its way among the dark-leaved trees. The kinglike head of Tu-toch-ah-nu-lah fixes our gaze. Then we turn to the grand summits of the South Dome and the Clouds' Rest, and the billowy masses seem to roll far away into an ocean of dim azure, relieved by snow-tipped waves. In the foreground, on the left, the Ribbon Fall descends in water and diamond spray from a height of 3300 feet; on the right we may once more admire the beautiful Pohono, or Bridal Veil Fall, with the peak of the Three Graces (3600 feet) towering in the background.

The *Sentinel Dome* is also easy of ascent; and is worth ascending, not only because it commands a fine prospect of the valley—with South Dome conspicuous over every other feature—the North Dome, Clouds' Rest, Cap of Liberty, Mount Starr King, the Yosemite Falls, the Nevada Fall, the Vernal Fall, and the Cataract of the Merced, but because its panorama includes a prolonged extent of the Sierra Nevada. Its principal summits are the following :—

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mount Hoffman, 13,872 feet. | Cathedral Peak, 11,000 feet. |
| Mount Dana, 13,227 feet. | Mount Lyell, 13,270 feet. |
| Castle Peak, 12,500 feet. | Gothic Peak, 10,850 feet. |
| Mount Starr King, 9,600 feet. | South Dome, 10,000 feet. |

The valleys of the San Joaquin and Sacramento, and the Coast Range, near the Golden Gate, are also visible.

The elevation of the Yosemite Valley above the sea, according to the Geological Survey, is 4060 feet. In the middle of summer, therefore, the heat is never overpowering; in winter, snow falls to a depth of from two to five feet. The valley is about seven miles long, and from half a mile to one and a quarter miles wide. It lies about due south-west to north-east. The total area is 3480 acres. The granite walls on either side rise from 4000 to 6000 feet in height.

Our account of this Eden land will close, with our readers' permission, in some words of honest enthusiasm, partly borrowed from Charles Brace's "New West."

There are excursions enough, as he says, to occupy the traveller—especially if he carry a sketch-book—for weeks among the beautiful scenes of the valley. Mount your horse early in the morning—or, still better, trust to your

own legs—and stroll up and down the marvellous canyon, enjoying the various novel scenes that open up at every step. To lie down in sight of one of the Great Falls is a sufficient summer-day's work for any reasonable man; and when he is weary of well-doing in this direction, let him ride to Inspiration Point, on the Mariposa trail, and gain such a view of the valley as is nowhere else attainable.

In Mr. Brace's opinion, the wonderful thing about the canyon, which will hereafter attract many an invalid from distant lands, is its divine atmosphere. The climate is so mild and invigorating that nothing can surpass it. Breathing the air of the Yosemite, a new hope and strength are infused into your life. The charm of the wonderful valley is its cheerfulness and joy. Even the awe-inspiring grandeur and majesty of its features do not overwhelm the sense of its exquisite beauty, its wonderful delicacy, its rich colour, and intense vitality.

"As I recall," says our friend, "those rides in the fresh morning or dewy noon, that scene of unequalled grandeur and beauty is for ever stamped upon my memory, to remain when all other scenes of earth have passed from remembrance: the pearly-gray and purple precipices, awful in mass, far above one, with deep shadows on their



VIEW FROM GLACIER POINT.
Looking towards the Vernal & Nevada Water Falls.



rugged surfaces—dark lines of gigantic archways or fantastic figures drawn clearly upon them—the bright white water dashing over the distant gray tops seen against the dark blue of the unfathomable sky—the heavy shadows over the valley from the mighty peaks—the winding stream and peaceful greensward with gay wild flowers below—the snowy summits of the Sierras far away—and the eternal voice of many waters wherever you walk or rest. This is the Yosemite in memory.”

And this it is which, long as life shall last, will be indelibly impressed on our heart and imagination—woods, and mountains, and leaping waterfalls.

TABLE OF ELEVATIONS AT YOSEMITE VALLEY.*

| WATERFALLS. | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Feet above Valley. | American Name. | Indian Name. | Meaning of Indian Name. |
| 940 | { Bridal Veil Fall | Pohon6. | { Spirit of the Evil Wind. |
| 3300 | Ribbon Fall | { Lung-oo-too- koo-ya. | { Long and slender. |
| 2034 | Yosemite Fall | Yo-se-mite. | Large Grisly Bear. |
| First Cataract, 1600 ft. Second do., 434 ft. Third do., 600 ft. | | | |

* Based upon the table in Hutchings' "Scenes of Wonder in California."

| Feet above Valley. | American Name. | Indian Name. | Meaning of Indian Name. |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 350 | Vernal Fall | Py-wy-ack. | { Cataract of Dia- monds. |
| 700 | Nevada Fall. | Yo-wi-ye. | Meandering. |
| 600 | { South Canyon Fall | Tu - lool - we - ack. | { ——— |
| 3850 | Sentinel. | Loya. | A medicinal shrub |
| 2000 | Royal Arch. | To-coy-ee | { Shade to Baby Cradle Basket. |

MOUNTAINS.

| | | | |
|------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6000 | South Dome. | Tis-sa-ack. | { Goddess of the Val- ley. |
| 6450 | Clouds' Rest. | ——— | ——— |
| 3725 | North Dome. | To-coy-ee. | { Shade to Baby Cradle Basket. |
| 2200 | { Washington Tower. | Hunto. | Watching Eye. |
| 2000 | { Cap of Liberty, taken above the base of Nevada Fall | Mah-tah. | Martyr Mountain. |
| 5000 | { Mount Starr King. | See-wah-lam. | ——— |
| 3705 | { Glacier King Point. | Er - na - ting Law-oo-too. | { Bearskin. |
| 3270 | Sentinel. | Loya. | A medicinal shrub. |

| Feet above Valley. | American Name. | Indian Name. | Meaning of Indian Name. |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 2400 | { Cathedral Spires. | Poo - see - nuh Chuck-ka. | Large acorn store-house. |
| 3750 | Three Graces. | Ko-soo-kong. | — |
| 2670 | { Cathedral Rock. | — | — |
| 3200 | { Inspiration Point. | — | — |
| 2900 | { Mount Beati- tude. | — | — |
| 3300 | The Captain. | { Tu - toeh - sh - nu-lâh. | { Semi - deity, and Great Chief of Valley. |
| 4000 | { The Three Brothers. | Pom-pom-pa- sus. | Mountains playing leap-frog. |
| 3100 | { Point East of Yosemite. | Hum-moo. | Lost Arrow. |

V.—THE MAMMOTH TREES.

"To equal which, the tallest pine,
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand."

MILTON.

The Mammoth Trees of *Mariposa* and *Fresno* were discovered by Mr. Hogg, a hunter, about the beginning of

August 1855. In the ensuing October Mr. Clayton, a civil engineer, met with other trees of the same class on the Fresno river. Other groups have been discovered at various dates; but none are so celebrated as those of Calaveras, which we shall hereafter describe, and next to which rank those of Mariposa in point of height, girth, and general sublimity.

The first point to make for is *Clark's Ranch*, about half-way between Mariposa and the Yosemite, where you will obtain the services of an efficient and obliging guide. The trail runs through a pleasant country, but, as it climbs a long ascent, is very wearisome.

We are, however, fully repaid for our fatigue when we enter the forest-shades, and catch glimpses of dim mysterious vistas, piercing an apparently boundless obscurity. The trunks of the trees are of a loftiness and a diameter that, at first, are singularly impressive, and awaken in you a very lively sentiment of wonder; but something of this feeling passes away as you turn from one giant to another, and find in each very similar characteristics.

The trees of which we are speaking belong to the *Taxodium* family, and to the genus known by ourselves as *Sequoia gigantea*, by our English cousins as *Wellingtonia*



THE GRIZZLED GIANT.
(Maciposa Grove.)
33 FEET DIAM.

gigantea. The origin of these names we shall hereafter relate.

One of the most curious stems—it is little more—is named “Satan’s Spear,” in allusion to Milton’s description of the weapon wielded by the fallen archangel in his battle with the hosts of heaven. Its circumference is 73 feet.

You are next taken to see a huge trunk, with a shattered top, that bears some resemblance to a ruined turret; it is 70 feet in circumference, and known as the “Giant’s Tower.”

The two double trees beyond are the “Twin Sisters;” and close together stand another couple—one scarred, and gnarled, and rugged; the other, smooth, straight and leafy—which have been not inaptly christened the “Twin Sisters.”

Across the ravine near “Satan’s Spear,” following Mr. Hutchings’ direction, we came to several noble trees on the side and summit of the mountainous ridge. One, with a circumference of 60 feet, and a dome of dense dark green foliage, is called “The Queen of the Forest.” And above it stands “The Artist’s Encampment,” 77 feet in circumference; but so large a portion of its trunk has

decayed, or been burned by the Indians up to a height of 30 feet, as considerably to lessen its dimensions.

We subjoin a table of the size and number of the principal trees in the Mariposa Grove, as ascertained by Mr. Clark and Colonel Warren. It does not quite coincide with Professor Whitney’s statement, that the total number is 365 of a diameter exceeding one foot, and 125 trees over 40 feet in circumference, but is believed to be more accurate:—

| Size. | No. of Trees. | Size. | No. of Trees. |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 102 feet in girth..... | 1 | 61 feet in girth..... | 1 |
| 100 " " | 2 | 60 " " | 12 |
| 97 " " | 1 | 59 " " | 4 |
| 92 " " | 1 | 58 " " | 1 |
| 82 " " | 1 | 57 " " | 3 |
| 80 " " | 1 | 56 " " | 1 |
| 77 " " | 2 | 55 " " | 3 |
| 76 " " | 34 | 54 " " | 2 |
| 75 " " | 3 | 53 " " | 1 |
| 72 " " | 1 | 51 " " | 3 |
| 70 " " | 3 | 50 " " | 10 |
| 68 " " | 1 | 49 " " | 7 |
| 66 " " | 1 | 48 " " | 5 |
| 65 " " | 4 | 47 " " | 3 |
| 64 " " | 1 | 46 " " | 4 |
| 63 " " | 6 | 45 " " | 4 |

| Size. | No. of Trees. | Size. | No. of Trees. |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 44 feet in girth..... | 8 | 36 feet in girth..... | 2 |
| 43 " | 3 | 35 " | 1 |
| 42 " | 6 | 32 " | 2 |
| 41 " | 3 | 28 " | 2 |
| 40 " | 9 | | |
| | | | 132* |

The foregoing table, however, does not comprise the whole group, which includes between 480 and 500, and covers from two to three hundred acres. There are about 300 sequoias.

Mr. Clark and Colonel Warren named some of the more remarkable of these mammoth trees, and the traveller may amuse himself by endeavouring to identify them:—

A group of four splendid trees, 250 feet high, and fully 50 feet in girth, were christened the "Four Pillars."

Two gigantic trees, 75 and 77 feet in circumference, received the names of "Washington" and "Lafayette."

Another group, from their excelling beauty, were called "The Graces;" and a tree, 300 feet high, and 80 feet in girth, suggested the poetical title of "The Lone Giant."

One monster tree that had fallen, and been burned

* In this table no notice is taken of the *height* of the trees, or of any under 28 feet in girth.

hollow, had recently proved large enough to accommodate a party of cavaliers, who rode through it, as they might have ridden through a tunnel 153 feet in length.

The mightiest tree of the group, however, now lies upon the ground, and, fallen as it lies, is a wonder still; it is charred and blackened, and time has stripped it of its heavy bark. Yet "across the butt of the tree, as it lay upturned, it measured 35 feet without its bark; there can be no question that in its vigour, with its bark on, it was 40 feet in diameter, or 120 feet in circumference. Only about 150 feet of the trunk remains, yet the cavity where it fell is still a large hollow beyond the portion burned off, and, upon pacing it, measuring from the root 120 paces; and estimating the branches, this tree must have been 400 feet high."

Crossing a ridge to the south-westward of the large grove is another small one, the South Grove, containing many splendid specimens; among others, a gnarled and maimed veteran, 90 feet in circumference, and a trunk prone upon the ground, 264 feet in length, which has been christened, by a lady, "King Arthur, the Prostrate Monarch." Another hoar, weather-beaten, and fire-scarred hulk, still 90 feet in girth, though the bark is

almost entirely gone, bears the name of the "Grizzled Giant."

THE FREZNO GROVE.

Following to some extent the course of the Big Creek, and keeping in a direction due south, we arrive, after a journey of from six to seven miles, at the Fresno group, consisting of about five hundred trees of the *Taxodium* family, on about as many acres of undulating forest-land. Here the two largest measure 81 feet each in circumference, rising from the ground as straight and smooth as pillars. The others, not less remarkable for their pillar-like appearance, are from 51 to 75 feet in circumference. Other species of trees seem in these localities to attain a remarkable development, owing, we suspect, to the geological character of the soil. At all events, Mr. Hutchings saw some very large sugar pines (*Pinus Lambertiana*) among them, and so did we; but he measured them, and we did not; being content, like Virgil's enemies (*sic vos, non votis*), to accept the labours of others. One lying on the ground is 29½ feet in circumference, and 237 feet in length; a splendid specimen of a conifer! We saw numbers on our route, however, with a diameter of from 7 to 10 feet.

The groves of these remarkable trees discovered up to the present time are *ten* :—

1. The *Calaveras*, containing about one hundred trees;
2. The great *South Grove*, including one thousand three hundred and eighty;
3. The *South Tuolumne Grove*, thirty-one;
4. One unnamed, south of the watershed of the Tuolumne and Merced Rivers, below Crane Flat, forty-two;
5. The *Mariposa Groves*, three hundred and sixty-five;
6. The *Fresno*, about five hundred;
7. The *San Joaquin* (12 miles east of Fresno), seven hundred;
8. The *Kings* and *Kaweah River*, "a belt of big trees extending for some ten miles," supposed to contain thousands;
9. The *North Tule River*; and
10. The *South Tule River*, upon whose banks trees are scattered over several square miles. These last-named groves were discovered by M. D'Heureuse, of the Geological Survey, in 1867.*

* Hutchings, "Scenes of Wonder in California."

The three commonly visited, however, are the Mariposa and Fresno, of which we have spoken; and the Calaveras, of which we are about to speak.

In no other part of the world, we believe, do the sequoias flourish on so colossal a scale. There is another species, *Sequoia sempervirens*, popularly known as the "Red Wood," which also attains a height of 300 feet.

VI.—THE MAMMOTH TREES—continued.

AT CALAVERAS.

[Route.—By stage from Stockton to Murphy's Camp, a day's journey. Then, next morning, by conveyance to the Grove, returning in the afternoon about 2 o'clock.

N.B.—It is unnecessary for the traveller who has visited Mariposa, to visit Calaveras, or *vice versa*—the Mammoth Trees everywhere presenting the same characteristics.

The Calaveras Grove of Big Trees was the first discovered, and is, to our mind, the most beautiful. It lies in lat. 30° N., and long. 120° 10' W., at an elevation above the sea-level of 4370 feet.

Here, within an area of fifty acres, we find one hundred and three trees of stately proportions, twenty of them exceeding 75 feet in circumference; and yet these are mere saplings, not half arrived at the maturity of treehood! Your guide will point you out a stump which affords sufficient space for a good-sized public meeting; and on whose surface—so runs the record—thirty-two persons danced four sets of cotillions at one time, without coming into chance collision. This stump measures 25 feet across, without the bark. It occupied the labour of five men for twenty-two days to fell it, and this work was accomplished, not with axe or saw, but by boring it off with pump augers. A small—what do we say?—a large pavilion has been erected upon this stump, and we can assure the reader it will comfortably shelter him and all his party, unless he goes attended by a retinue like the President's!

The largest tree now standing has been named—from its immense size, the two breast-like protuberances, or *mammæ*, on one side, and the number of small trees of a similar species growing in its vicinity—the "Mother of the Forest." That it is one of the "big facts" of Cali-



HOTEL. CALAVERAS GROVE.

foria, may be gathered from the following measurements :—*

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| At the base, its circumference is... | 84 feet. |
| At twenty feet from the ground... | 69 feet. |
| At seventy feet from the ground... | 43 feet, 6 inches. |
| At one hundred and sixteen feet... | 39 feet, 6 inches. |
| Height to the first branch | 137 feet. |
| Total height..... | 321 feet. |

And here let us remark that we would fain have said something new and original about the Calaveras Grove. But we find it impossible. It is a gathering of the hugest, but not the most picturesque, trees in the world. We would not give up our cedars or pines, or maples or chestnuts, for a whole forest of them. Their foliage grows at too great an elevation to lend the tree any conspicuous adornment, and what you *really* see is, trunk after trunk of a surprising height, running up for two hundred feet or more without the relief of a single branch. We prefer, for beauty and majesty, the sugar pines that cluster round about them, and which, on the

* The bark of this tree was removed to England, and put up in the Crystal Palace, as a visible representation of a mammoth tree. Unfortunately for the Londoners, it was destroyed by fire in 1866.

whole, are of similar gigantic dimensions, but possess a decidedly greater *romanticity* of appearance.

In fact, as Dr. Todd has honestly said,—and we shelter ourselves under his mantle,—on your introduction to the mammoth trees you are, at first, disappointed: the trees do not look as you expected; they are not as large; “they look as if somebody had stripped off their clothing, and left them in their night-dress.” Dr. Todd’s mode of realizing the stature of these giants we have not adopted, but we can recommend it to others.

“The height of enjoyment,” he says, “is to lie down on your back in the twilight of evening or under the full moon, and look up, say ten feet at a look, till the eye has travelled all the way up to the top—over three hundred feet. We forget, too, when looking at a tree thirty feet in diameter, and wonder why it is not larger, that a pine tree with us, which is five feet in diameter, is a monster. I never saw but one of that size at the North. Let us now walk into the grove: the first impression you receive is, that these giants must be very old; how old you cannot possibly say. By counting the concentric circles in the tree, some will count thirteen

hundred, and some near three thousand,.....making the tree as many years old. For my own part, though I have heard it complained that they are four thousand years old, yet I should not be willing to certify for more than half that age. You are struck unpleasantly that the names of men, such as modern generals and colonels, should be screwed to trees that have been living and bearing the storms of earth centuries before these men were ever heard of. Why should such names as 'Phil Sheridan' be attached to a tree that perhaps saw light before the star arose over Bethlehem, or Titus besieged Jerusalem? But there they are, and you may speak to 'George Washington,' 'Ahraham Lincoln,' 'Daniel Webster,' 'W. H. Seward,' 'Andrew Johnson,' and a host of other names; or, if you want to address whole states, there is the 'Granite State,' 'Vermont,' 'Old Dominion,' 'Old Kentucky,' and many others."

In this last matter we don't agree with our friend the doctor. If it is necessary to distinguish the trees by separate names, we do not see why we should not take them from contemporary history in our own country, as well as go back to "Titus" and "Jerusalem." The only rule we are inclined to enforce is, that no grotesque

or absurd designations be allowed—nothing inconsistent with the dignity and colossal bearing of the giants of Calaveras.*

One curious thing connected with them is the smallness of the cones which produce them. They are no larger than a hen's egg, and the seed is a mere speck—about one-twelfth the weight of an apple-seed!

But we must resume our description:—Near the "Mother of the Forest" lies prone the "Father of the Forest," less fortunate in his fate than his venerated consort. He lies half-embedded in the soil, hut grand in his decay, and obviously worthy of the title given him. In circumference at the roots, he measures 110 feet. His trunk is 200 feet long before he throws off a

* A lady of our party—Mrs. William Nelson, the wife of Mr. W. Nelson, of the well-known British publishing firm of Thomas Nelson and Sons—was allowed by the proprietor of these trees to name one of them, after the city of her residence, "Auld Reekie,"—that is, Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland. And we have that lady's authority, and the authority of her friends, to say that they enjoyed their trip across the continent immensely, and will always entertain a kindly recollection of American hospitality.



HOUSE ON STUMP OF BIG TREE.
(Calaveras Grove.)



single branch, and throughout the whole of this length the trunk is hollow, forming a kind of tunnel or corridor, wherein a man can walk erect. At a height of 300 feet from the roots, and at the point where it was rent in twain by falling against another huge tree, it measures 18 feet in circumference.

Now let us direct our attention to a graceful pair, which, from their seemingly affectionate approximation to one another, are appropriately known as "The Husband and Wife." Their dimensions are nearly equal: about 60 feet in circumference at the base, and, in height, about 250 feet.

The "Hermit" rises alone in individual grandeur; its tall and shapely trunk mounting upward, by sure degrees but slow, to an elevation of 318, and a circumference of 60 feet.

Another giant has been designated "Hercules;" its girth is 95, and its height, 312 feet.*

Then there is another, the "Burnt Tree," which lies

* On the trunk is cut the name of "G. M. Wooster, June 1850," who was present with the party of Mr. Whitehead, when the latter accidentally discovered these lords of the forest.

on the ground, and has been hollowed out by repeated burnings. At least you can ride into it sixty feet on horseback. It is calculated that its height, when standing, must have been 330 feet; its circumference, 97 feet.

A bowed, broken, and sad-looking tree is the "Old Maid" of this family of Anakim: 261 feet high, and 59 feet in circumference. And it has a suitable companion in a rugged and scarred old trunk, the "Old Bachelor," 298 feet high, and about 21 feet in diameter.

The "Siamese Twins" rise from the ground in a single stem; but, at an elevation of about 40 feet, divides into two separate trees, and attains an altitude of 300 feet.

But one of the most beautiful of the forest-giants is, as Mr. Hutchings points out, the "Pride of the Forest." It is exceedingly well-shaped, straight as a mast, and solid as granite: 275 feet high, and 60 feet in circumference.

We must not overlook the picturesque couple of the "Mother and Son: the latter, 302 feet, has not attained, as yet, the maternal stature, 315 feet. Taking them together, their circumference is 93 feet.

The "Guardian" is a noble-looking tree, 312 feet high, by 81 feet in circumference. Somewhat inferior in elevation, but of more picturesque character, is the

"Beauty of the Forest," whose graceful head rises to the height of 307 feet, while measuring round the trunk 65 feet.

There is also the "Horseback Ride," a hollow trunk, 100 feet long, which affords a sheltered arcade for equestrian display. Another hollow tree, but still erect, has been called "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and accommodates in its interior twenty-five persons comfortably. It is 305 feet high, and 91 feet in circumference.

The "Two Guardsmen" stand by the roadside, and at the entrance of the clearing. They are 300 feet high, and while one is 65, the other is 69 feet in circumference.

The "Three Graces" is one of the most attractive groups in the whole grove. In height they are nearly equal (295 feet); and they measure, jointly, 92 feet in circumference, at their base.

It was long supposed that each concentric circle of any one of these sequoias, or about two inches in diameter, represented the growth of *one* year; and as nearly three thousand concentric circles, it was supposed, might be counted in the trunks of the fallen trees, the conclusion seemed inevitable, that they were in existence three thousand years ago—or nearly twelve hundred years

before the birth of our Saviour—in the very pride of prosperity of the mysterious Egyptian empire. But more careful researches have demonstrated the number of concentric rings to be exaggerated, and the actual age of these trees is now stated at eleven hundred years.

Let us add, as every traveller cannot fail to see, that among the giants of the grove are scattered a multitude of young giants, not more perhaps than two hundred to four hundred years old. These, if no catastrophe intervene, will, in eight or ten hundred years, become worthy successors of the present race. The catastrophe most to be feared is a forest-fire; and we trust that due precautions will be taken to prevent a calamity which would be irreparable, and which the whole civilized world would regret.

Now for the story of the discovery of the Calaveras Grove.

As we have seen, its giant trees were first sighted by Wooster, Whitehead, and their party, in 1850. At least, it is said so; but we have never heard that they made their discovery known. In 1852 they were again discovered, or re-discovered, by a man employed as a hunter, for the purpose of keeping a body of miners supplied with fresh



THE THREE GRACES.
(Calaveras Grove.)

meat from the large quantities of game frequenting that district of California. One day, while in pursuit of a bear he had wounded, he suddenly found himself in sight of these colossal trees; and the spectacle so filled him with astonishment that he forgot all about the bear.

Returning to the miners' camp, he related what he had seen; but his comrades laughed at the idea of trees three hundred feet high; and ridiculed his enthusiasm in the approved manner.

At the time he said no more; but, a few days afterwards, he reappeared in camp with the news that he had slain an enormous bear, and that he required the assistance of some of the men to bring it in.

A party was sent with him for this purpose. They toiled on for miles, until they felt inclined to denounce the bear as the unnecessary cause of a laborious journey. All at once, however, the mammoth trees burst upon their sight, and the hunter confessed that his "enormous bear" was a fiction, intended to bring them to the grove, and by so doing to prevail over their incredulity.

In due time, an article appeared in the *North American Review* describing the new Californian "sensation." It attracted little attention in this country; but, when

republished in an English magazine, stirred up the interest of the most distinguished botanists in the Old Country, and Dr. Lindley named the species *Wellingtonia gigantea*. When this became known in the States, our savants grew indignant that an American tree should be named after an English hero. A warm discussion ensued. It came, however, to a satisfactory result—that the English might, if they liked, retain the appellation of *Wellingtonia gigantea*; but that orthodox Americans would adopt the name of an Indian chief, *Sequoia*.

Let us add, in conclusion, that the traveller should go on from the Grove to the CALAVERAS CAVES (14 m. west), situated on M'Kenney's Humbug, a tributary of the Calaveras River. They were discovered in 1850. Through a narrow passage we enter the *Council Chamber*, 60 feet by 20 feet; thence we pass on to view the huge mass of stalactites, appropriately called the *Cataract*. Another apartment, with a lofty opening in the centre of the roof, is called the *Cathedral*. There are also the *Bishop's Palace*, the *Musical Hall*, and a perfect fairy scene of wonder—the *Bridal Chamber*. This is decorated, most gorgeously and capriciously, with pillars and curtains

and carved work of the finest description. When lighted up, the scene produces an impression on the imagination which is not easily described, and, assuredly, is not soon forgotten.

There is a very comfortable and commodious hotel situated near the entrance to this great cavern.*

VII.—THE CALIFORNIA GEYSERS.

“Wonderful, indeed, are all His works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?”
MILTON.

The reader must be pleased to suppose that he and we have returned to San Francisco, and are now intent upon a new expedition to the celebrated Geyser Springs of California.

* The Hotel was erected, in 1853, by Messrs. Magee and Angel, at the cost of about \$4500.

We go by steamer to a place called Vallejo (25 miles),* lying very near the town of Benicia, famous for its production of the pugilistic hero, the “Benicia Boy.” Thence we take the cars up the Napa Valley, which in loveliness, though not in grandeur, may compete with the Yosemite. Its length is estimated at 30 miles, and its width at 5 miles. The hills on either side are of picturesque outline and most luxuriantly wooded, while the vale itself is a specimen of what cultivation can effect under a genial climate and upon a fruitful soil.

At the end of this enchanted garden we reach Callistoga, where we pass the night; and next morning, at six o'clock, we enter an open stage, and entrust ourselves to the care of the illustrious Californian “whip,” Friend Foss. On this occasion, he certainly displayed the utmost skill and coolness. He started with six horses at full gallop, and this gallop was kept up as long as the condition of the road would permit. As, on our approach to the Geysers, we ascended a mountain nearly 4000 feet

* At Vallejo, the tourist, if so inclined, may take the Napa Valley Railroad; or may drive, ride, or pedestrianize, as he feels inclined.

high, the pace maintained was truly wonderful. At length, after a splendid drive through a fine country, we pulled up at Geyser Hotel; rested and refreshed ourselves; and pushed forward into the Geyser Canyon.

The traveller at first becomes aware of an extraordinary rush and roar, like the escape of steam from a hundred locomotive boilers. Next, his organ of smell is seriously titillated by a very strong stench of sulphur; and next he feels a remarkably uncomfortable degree of heat in the soil over which he laboriously limps.

He now finds himself in front of a small boiling stream of alum; and at no great distance flows another of nitric acid, or it may be of Epsom salts, soda, sulphuric acid, or ammonia: for this canyon seems to be the great laboratory of Nature, where she keeps her inexhaustible supply of "chemicals." A deep opening, marked by a column of steam and filled with a volume of liquid black as ink, is called the "Devil's Inkstand." Further on lies the "Witches' Caldron," a pool of 3 feet in diameter, but so deep that it has never been fathomed. Here you may enjoy the unromantic but useful experiment of boiling some eggs in three minutes. But the scene is scarcely fitted for it. The caldron is a well deep in the precipitous

side of a mountain; and the liquid with which it is filled being black and sulphurous, it seems fit to reserve it for some more appropriate feat than boiling eggs!

There are upwards of a thousand jets of steam constantly escaping in this canyon, which—with its noises, its stench, and its mists and its intense heat—may not unfairly be regarded as a ravine let loose, in some mysterious way, from the infernal regions.

To the left is the "Steamboat," where, high above your head, springs the roaring, hissing steam, until every nerve in your body is jarred and set shivering. Another, sounding like the whirring machinery of a mill in motion, has very fitly been called the "Devil's Grist-Mill." The same ubiquitous personage has, at another part of the canyon, his "Tea-Kettle." The "brew" is not one which mortals are likely to have a fancy for; and if you thrust your stick into it, it snarls and sputters like a huge cat when a strange dog enters her presence.

Singular to say, the brook which traverses the canyon is cool and clear at its source, and for some distance into the canyon; but as the numerous springs pour into it, its temperature rises, and its purity is sullied. It flows into the Pluton River.

The canyon is full of interesting features. For instance, a little way up, you can find out a deep and shadowy pool, which engulfs the united waters of the springs above it, and these, growing cool in their progress, while retaining their medicinal properties, the basin becomes a bath fit for a Niwon L'Enclos—in fact, for any beauty that ever was or will be memorable.

Keep in the same direction, and you will light upon "Proserpine's Grotto," where the beauty might attire and compose herself after her bath. It is surrounded by rugged rocks of the most fantastic outline, and by trees which entangle their branches so as to form a pleasant "contiguity of shade." And through this shade many fanciful glimpses can be caught of the gorge as it narrows far away into an apparent fissure, and seems to terminate in the very blue of heaven; while waterfalls flash down the rugged sides, like sudden gleams of a silver wing.

Some people have said, exclaims our Hutchings indignantly, that Californian scenery is monotonous, that her mountains are all alike, and that her skies repeat each other from day to day! We can confidently assert that nothing more signally false was ever said, for California is emphatically the "land of contrasts." As for

its skies, see them at dawn, at noon, and at eve, or when they are decorated with night's glorious jewellery of worlds, and judge for yourself whether poet's imagination ever conceived a spectacle more various, more splendid, and more magnificent!

VIII.—LAKE TAHOE.

"By the blue lake's silver beach."

LONGFELLOW.

As we take this to be the most beautiful of the Californian lakes, we shall particularly direct the stranger's attention to it. We cannot say that it lies exactly in the route of the tourist who "does" Yosemite, the Big Trees, and the Geysers; and then "makes tracks" for Oregon, or hurries homeward to New York or Boston. However, he who has an eye and a heart for Nature in her tranquil loveliness will hasten thither; and if he can decide upon no other course, will run by rail to Truckee City, and thence take Campbell and Burke's stage to the Lake, a journey of 64 miles.

The road is excellent, and follows the north bank of the river Truckee, under the shade of melancholy boughs, or

in the open sunshine, where the woods are broken up by breadths of rich meadow-land.

According to the State Survey, the lake lies in two states and five counties. That is a statistical division. The boundary line between California and Nevada runs north and south, right across the lake, until it reaches a certain point therein, where it changes to a course 17° east of south. Hence it comes to pass that the counties of El Dorado and Placer (California), Washoe, Ormsby, and Douglas (Nevada), can all claim a share of the translucent waters of Lake Tahoe.

Physically speaking, the lake occupies the level of a rich valley of the Sierra Nevada, at the eastern base of its central ridge, a few miles north of the main trail to Carson Valley. It lies at an elevation of some 5800 feet above the sea-level, and about 1500 feet above Carson Valley, from which it is separated by a backbone of mountain about three to four miles wide.

The extreme southern latitude of the lake is $38^{\circ} 57'$. It is bisected, or nearly so, by the 120th meridian of west longitude; the western section belonging to California, the eastern to Nevada. It measures 22 miles in length, and 10 miles in breadth. The mountains en-

circling it vary in elevation from 1000 to 3000 and even 4000 feet in height, and are chiefly composed of weather-worn white granite, occasionally assuming the finest curves and sweepings. The shore is formed almost entirely of dazzlingly white granite sand. The slopes running up from this shore are clothed with densest pine wood; the waters of the lake are darkly, deeply, beautifully blue. Hence the reader may judge what a charming fantastic spectacle is made up with this combination of ultramarine and dark purple, and glowing white and emerald green.

In making the circuit of the lake—a sapphire in a silver setting—you meet with the following points of interest:—the *Cave*, in the hill-side, overhanging the waters at a height of 100 feet; the *Hot Springs*, just across the Nevada border; *Cornelian Bay*, an exquisite curve in the coast, where the water is of wonderful limpidity; *Tahoe City*, on the west side, where there are hotels, stores, and livery stables; *Sugar Pine Point*, a mountain spur covered with a mass of pine-wood; *Emerald Bay*, a kind of creek or inlet, two miles long, and broadening from 400 yards at the mouth to two miles at the upper extremity; and *Lake Valley Creek*, fed by

mountain torrents and springs, and in its turn feeding Lake Tahoe.

So much for this very picturesque and coarming lake. A glimpse of such a gem, of such a thing of beauty, is positively refreshing to a weary imagination, and revives and renovates it; but to ascertain all its beauties the traveller should take up his sojourn in Tahoe City, and daily sail in and about the exquisite shores. Then, having filled

his sketch-book, he may resort to rod and line; and when tired of catching trout, may shoulder his rifle, away among the mountain-woods, and satisfy himself with quail and grouse. Believe our words, O stranger! If you don't see Tahoe, you will just miss one of the prettiest sights in this part of the continent. But we have a better opinion of you, and can rely that you will act according to our instructions.





